Markets, evaluations and rankings

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Abstract: *»Märkte, Bewertungen und Klassifizierungen«*. Starting from the problem of economic coordination, this article defines markets as a social structure for the exchange of rights in which offers are evaluated and priced, and compete with one another. It identifies temporality, the roles of buyers and sellers, the voluntary nature of trade, property rights and competition as key features distinguishing markets from trade and other forms of economic coordination. In order to function, markets require a shared understanding of a product, a common culture as rules of behavior and an agreement over the economic value of an offer. Finally, the article distinguishes between "fixed" and "switch-role markets" to show that it is necessary to speak of markets in plural.

Keywords: market order; definition of markets; evaluation.

Introduction

Markets have evolved through history, but even though they are now both widespread and taken for granted, it is not so clear what they are. We need to know what a market is, and of equal importance, what is not a market. Apart from conceptual concerns, we need to know this for more practical reasons: in order to affect markets, to reform markets that have shown malfunctions, and to set up new markets. By addressing the simple question of what a market is, this article also provides an analysis of the basic market elements. The market is only one form of economic coordination, but it has gradually come to replace the other two important forms of coordination, networks and organizations. These three forms, of course, often exist in combinations, or in relation to one another, and our understanding of one is contingent on our understanding of the others.

Our need of knowing more about markets is motivated by what is going on in social life. Markets are part of a general social trend of evaluation and ranking, two ways which have become ever more important in social life. Social interaction, also outside of the economy proper, is increasingly affected and

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coordinated by various forms of evaluations. Furthermore, decisions, decision processes and their outcomes are audited (Power 1997: 383), and people are evaluated and compared.

I argue that we can only understand what is called "marketization" or "economization" if we better understand, on the one hand, what is general of all markets, and, on the other hand, the various forms of markets. It is a mistake in much of the existing literature to talk of the market, instead of markets – referring both to the empirical variation but also to the different forms of markets. The different forms reflect different ways of how markets are organized and what implications they have, as well as how they are ordered. This paper takes the large and central question in sociology of order as the starting point. Order in markets is essentially about predictability; without order actors face complete uncertainty.

This text highlights a social form of coordination that can be observed also outside of the economy and its markets. People talk of markets and organizations outside of the economy (Becker 1991; Bourdieu 1991), but there is no non-economic counterpart to what we call market, which implies, wrongly in my view, that there is no difference between markets, in the economy, and "markets" outside of the economy. A suggestion has been made to use the concept *convaluations* (Aspers 2010) as an overall notion, which means that markets, as it were, are only *economic* convaluations. Put differently, the form of coordination that involves evaluation, competition, and decision based on them, to coordinate, is not restricted to the economy. A first step towards improving our state of knowledge, however, is to focus on the economy and its markets.

Markets, moreover, can also be seen from the perspective of the individual. They propel the trend of individualization. Markets enable people to interact and to get what they want by paying; a transaction that must not be prolonged beyond the time necessary to transact, and it comes, hence, with few – or no – strings attached. Economic transactions, with money as the steering or communication means (Habermas 1984; Luhmann 1988; Simmel 1978), have gradually replaced other forms of social interaction and communication. There is, of course, also a debate, which is old, about the social consequences of market interaction (Hirschman 1986).

This short text is concentrated on the core of markets – what they are. To explain this I introduce the coordination problem they help to overcome and say a few words on other forms that are used to tackle the same issue. The bulk of the text is on markets, and how to define them.

Coordination in the Economy

Coordination means to bring something about in an orderly fashion. In social life people coordinate meetings using ties, and perhaps networks, by agreeing on a time and place to meet. An internal meeting at a firm is decided by one, and obeyed by others. Coordination, as said, takes place inside and outside of the economy. The contemporary economy can be defined as production, consumption, or exchange oriented to at least one valuation device. Today, the market is the dominant valuation device, and this definition of the economy, hence, includes economic activities such as production, consumption, and exchange. It implies, furthermore, that the market is an arena for processing existing values, but it also produces intersubjective valuations of items that can become entrenched social constructions. Consequently, markets will be important when people make their subjective evaluations of items. The market itself is ordered, but this also suggests that markets produce order. The created order is of a double nature: market acts reproduce the structure of the market (Giddens 1984), but what is less obvious is that a market informs also non-participants about what other people and organizations value through signaling (Hayek 1945). This signaling is primarily observed by actors in adjacent markets, suggesting that markets indeed are embedded in one another.

How do we draw the line between economy and what is not economy, given this definition of the economy? The man who repairs his car because he cannot afford to let a professional do this is involved in an economic activity, but the person who does it because he likes to repair cars is not. This suggests that meaning is central for the distinction. The difference between the two examples illustrates that markets provide a tool for reflection and for generating intersubjective valuations. This means that "calculations" of production, consumption, and exchange with some orientation to the market can be seen as economic.[1] It also means that economic action is by definition interrelated in the sense that any economic action is carried out in relation to the intersubjectively constructed "market".

What does this definition imply? The definition leans toward a formal analysis of the economy. Though market is not a necessary component of calculation, it is the most common valuation device. A system of interrelated markets will of course facilitate this very much. A further important means is money, which enables people to put numbers on the valued offers, and to compare and calculate them. In fact, money facilitates calculation and comparisons to the degree that it contributes to the order of markets.

The market, however, is by no means the only way of economic coordination. Provided that people have some, albeit scarce, resources, which simply means that they have something which they value and which also others value, they may want to do something alone or together with others. There are then

[1] It is worth noting that this definition, at one level, leaves out many activities that people do at home, and for which they are not paid. The important point is that it accounts, through the orientation of meaning, for the activities people do at home, but which is oriented to the market.

several ways of making this happen. Polanyi (1957) and others (Thompson 2003) have identified autarchy, networks, organizations and markets as four different ways of economic coordination. This text will look only at the market.

The Market Definition

A *market* is a social structure for the exchange of rights in which offers are evaluated and priced, and compete with one another, which is shorthand for the fact that actors – individuals and firms – compete with one another via offers. This definition covers the market as a place, as well as markets as an "institution." This connection is observed not only if we trace the phenomenon, but also in its Latin etymology, *mercatus*, which refers to trade and to place. Both, however, refer to public activities. Each market usually has a name, which normally refers to what is being traded – for example, the market for aircrafts – but the product is not necessarily the ordering principle of the market. Other markets, and their names, are connected to a specific place, such as Portobello road market in London.

I concentrate on the essential market elements that constitute the definition. Then I look at the three equally necessary prerequisites. When the definition and the market prerequisites are taken together, we get a good view of what makes markets different from other social formations.

Elements of the Market Definition

It is possible to talk of a market structure because of actors' shared practices and/or cognitive frames. This is to say that temporality of the market is the key; in contrast to a single transaction, which may take place only once and with no collective perception and practices of a pre-existing social structure of a market, an ordered market implies the preconception of there being a market. Actors, in other words, are aware of what is traded in the market, its scripts and rules, and how prices are set. The market is, put in other terms, an institution (Berger and Luckmann 1991), which means that much of it is taken for granted. The notion of structure accounts for the fact that a market has extension over time. Social structure is constituted by the two roles, buyer and seller, each standing on one side of the market, facing the other. This means that a market implies a record of repeated actual transactions and not merely potential transactions. The two roles have different interests: "to sell at a high price" and to "buy at a low price" (Geertz 1992: 226). It is only because of actors' interest in trading that there can be a market (Swedberg 2003). In a market, actors get something in return for what they give up; this is the generic buy-and-sell relationship.

In contrast to the hierarchical structure of an organization, which is characterized by decision, and the right of one to order another to fulfill a task, or the reciprocity of ties making up networks, a market is characterized by "voluntary" and peaceful interaction (Weber 1922). Though markets may give rise to protests and violence, and though many objects traded in markets, from weapons, drugs and prostitutes are morally questionable, the system of market transactions itself is "peaceful". This has to do with the fact that property rights – that is, a form of ownership based on socially respected economic rights (Carruthers and Ariovich 2004: 30) that fixate the underlying assets – are respected. The property rights that actors exchange must be recognized; if not, we must either speak of robbery, if one party simply takes everything, or gift giving, if one party gives without getting anything in return. There are, strictly speaking, no property rights "traded" within an organization. At the most one may speak of a quasi-market in which departments compete with one another, but the properties traded nonetheless belong to the organization, and not to the individuals or department trading. In the case of bankruptcy, everything, including the chair or the saw used by the employees, may be sold at the auction to pay the debts of the *organization*. In a network things are given, but there is no way that the giver can demand that the recipient has to return. This suggests that we cannot speak of "exchange", unless we make the notion tautological as was done in the classical exchange theories. Obviously, the tie between the two is likely to be cut if the recipient never returns anything; the relation is then no longer reciprocal.

In markets, actors deal with property rights. Property rights, moreover, must be possible to enforce in all kinds of trading, not just market trading, and this facilitates trade (North 1990). To accept property rights is not to deny the struggle (Simmel 1923: 216-32; Weber 1922) inherent in the processes of "haggling and bargaining" (Marshall 1961: 453) between buyers and sellers (Swedberg 1998) in the market, and rivalry and competition between actors on the same side (Simmel 1955: 57). Pure market transactions have a distinct ending, in contrast, for example, to the openness and future orientation of network relations (Powell 1990). Market exchange is a voluntary form of economic coordination in which actors have a choice: they can decide to trade, sell, or buy whatever is seen as a legitimate offer, at the price at which they are offered, but they do not have to. In the past, when one slave owner sold slaves on the market to other slave owners, this – as appalling as it may seem – was as much a market as when children choose which computer game to buy in the supermarket. As long as the property rights and the right to trade are legitimate, granted by the state or any other force capable of imposing sanctions, if only among those who control the rights, a market can exist. Property rights are also controlled and maintained by means of violence and reputation and status in illegal markets, for example, those controlled by the Mafia (Gambetta 1993). As property rights are often embedded in social custom, they are normally not contested (Hodgson 1988: 147-71).

With the help of these notions, let us now try to see what falls outside of market interaction, which of course means that it can still be part of the economy. Actors, and more concretely people, may be more or less forced to sell goods, and even their organs or children, in a market. This does not necessarily affect the way the market functions. The issue at stake is how illegal and/or immoral actions push (by force) and pull (through the expected "prosperity") people and their goods into a market, not the question of whether it is a market or not. However, the capturing of slaves in Africa or elsewhere was not a market, as the slaves did not have a choice. That the slave market is characterized by voluntary transactions by the owners of the assets – the slaves – does not mean that participation in the market is a joyful experience for those being traded. In other markets, too, people are sold, for example, players who are traded from one club to another in European football (Arnout 2006). However, these players get a large sum of the costs of transfer, and they decided to be on this market, and seem to know the conditions, since they in fact sign the contract. Consequently, the question of how the offers in the market are made from analysis of the market must be held separated.

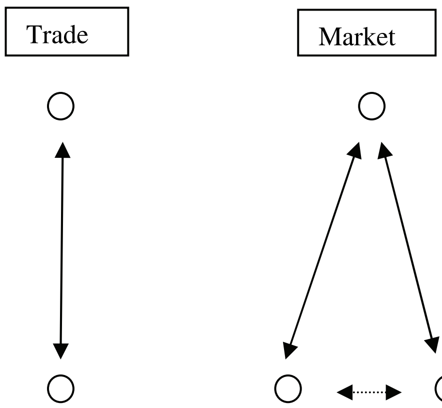
As indicated, the objects of trade in markets must not only be of interest to the actors, but must also be morally legitimate objects of market transactions, as Zelizer and others have shown (Healy 2006; Zelizer 1981). Some objects of trade are morally or politically "blocked" from being exchanged, such as political decisions (Beckert 2006). Financial markets which, by and large, are seen as legitimate today, have only gradually become so; they were not necessarily legitimate outside financial circles in the eighteenth century, when "financial transactions took place in coffee houses and in the adjacent streets, with traders and customers often chased by the police" (Preda 2009: 60-1). Legitimacy must be separated from the distinction between legal and illegal markets; the market for student apartments in the former Soviet Union was seen by many as morally legitimate, though it was illegal (Katsenelinboigen 1977). Legitimacy as a market condition may appear as tautological, since there can be no market unless it is legitimate, but the important point is to think of the degree of legitimacy a certain market has – some black markets are, under certain conditions, accepted by many, and in other cases by few people. The market as a form of coordination does not exclude trade of any kind of goods or services. "Black" or illegal markets, meaning trade of objects that are not legal to trade, can be observed.

The notion of legitimacy is important for understanding how markets can exist. At the most narrow level, on which I have concentrated, it is enough that those trading think that the market, and the exchange of a certain good, is a legitimate activity. In practice, a more general issue of legitimacy matters. It matters a lot for the market, and for its actors to organize it as they want, if it is seen as legitimate of its environment. This means that actors in other markets must accept it, but we can also speak of the ethical-political legitimacy of markets more generally in society. These latter aspects are not explored further in this text.

Trade and Markets

All exchange in markets is trade, but not all trade takes place in markets. In contrast to trade, which can take place between two parties who exchange different kinds of "rights," markets are characterized by competition. A consequence of competition is the interchangeability of the roles of buyers and sellers. In a market, in contrast to trade, at least one of the two sides, whether the buying or the selling side, must be composed of at least two actors. Thus, the minimum number of actors required for a market to exist is three; only with three actors can we talk of roles. The point here is that a role is made up of several actors. That several actors appear on at least one of the two sides is the condition for a comparison of their offers. Comparison is not enough to have a market, however. To speak of a market, as the definition suggests, requires competition between at least two offers (parties), on the one side, for exchange with the other side. It is in this selection process that evaluation takes place in such a way that competing offers can be compared to each other. Competition refers to the relation between two or more actors aiming for an end that cannot be shared between them. It must be underlined that competition is for the benefit of the third party, who enjoys the advantages derived from it – *tertius gaudens*. It is this actor, for example, a single buyer, who can choose among those who strive to sell their offers, who benefits from the competition, not those who compete (Simmel 1955: 154-162). Figure 1 illustrates the distinction between trade and market.

Figure 1: Trade and Market Relations as two Forms of Economic Exchange.



Note: The arrows represent relations between actors, who are depicted as circles.

The difference between trade and market, both of which are instances of economic exchange, suggests that the connotation, already mentioned, of the market as something "public," or transparent, is important. Figure 1 illustrates this by creating a triangle between the actors – a form of space – which is between them. However, competition can be either public or secret. The *tertius gaudens* buyer may utilize his superior position and let two or more sellers compete publicly so that participants and others know of this, but this may also be secret so that no actor but *tertius gaudens* is aware of the competition that takes place among the sellers. Moreover, if one side – for example, a single seller – lies to the only existing buyer that there is also another buyer, we have "quasi-competition" since this may cause the only buyer to reveal how much he values the product in a "real" competition. In some cases, both sellers and buyers compete in a market; this is the case in the so-called double auction of stock exchanges.

Cartels are ways of secretly diminish competition, while its members appear as if they are involved in an open competition. The public square, which is the traditional market place, or the fair (Braudel 1992: vol. I, see also Moeran in this issue), are ways to make market interaction public. Through technological devices – for example computer screens and systems that monitor trade – public trading can also be done at the stock exchange (MacKenzie 2006). In contrast to the old fashioned stock exchange, in which it was more clear who was buying and who was selling (Preda 2009; Walras 1954), contemporary markets have attempted to do away with all personal relations in the market, to diminish the potential influence actors may have.

Public prices are of considerable importance for making markets transparent, and the fact that markets generate transparency is an important aspect since they operate as coordination devices. This makes it possible to keep actors accountable, and the consequences can be observed, evaluated with the help of the competition of a market. Competition must not boil down to price competition between homogenous goods – this is just one special case. Competition can be due to innovation, as in Schumpeterian economics, or to virtually any variables which are identifiable with regard to the offer, such as quality, service, or style (Chamberlin 1953).

Prerequisites of Market Order

I have outlined what a market is by describing its essential characteristics, and by contrasting market coordination with other forms, organization, and one or several ties that constitutes the form called network. There are, in addition, three prerequisites that must be met for a market to be ordered; in other words, so that it is possible to talk of a market. In contrast to the elements, all of which must be present in market, the prerequisites are necessary. They differ from the elements, however, in the large variation. It is primarily because of the different ways the prerequisites are met that we can speak of different markets. I have decided to treat the prerequisites separately, as each of them can be met in empirically different ways: either actively, by organized coordination, or passively, in the form of an emergent order. They are listed below.

1) *What the market is "about."* Eggs are not sold in the same market as boats. Shoes are sold in yet another market. This means that "things" that are acknowledged as similar are traded in the "same" market.
2) *How things are done in the market.* The second prerequisite has to do with culture in the market. Culture is defined as beliefs, norms, "tools," rules and behaviors – for example, discourse and practice – appropriate to the setting. That is to say that the institutional framework may differ, including between markets that "are about the same thing," such as two different markets in which the shares of one company is traded.
3) *The value of the offer.* Given that actors know what is traded, the economic value of the good can, and must, be determined. This can be done in different ways, for example, in different forms of auctions (Smith 1989), or in markets such as food stores, in which the sellers offer groceries with fixed prices; consumers can then react to these prices.

When the elements described are present, and the prerequisites are met, we have an ordered market. It is only when there is order that there is a market. The order enables actors to reduce uncertainty (Beckert 1996; White 2002:1). However, in any existing market the problem of order has already been solved (Luhmann 1981).

What I have discussed so far pertains to all markets; the prerequisites and the essential elements of the market inform us about what is a market and how it differs from other forms of coordination. The next section deals with different forms of markets. Market forms are characterized by their different combination of the elements. This brief text will only discuss one, albeit important, distinction between markets in which actors enact the permanent role as seller or buyer, so-called fixed role markets, and markets in which actors switch roles between being buyer and seller.

Market Forms

There are two reasons for speaking of markets rather than the market. One is that there are plenty of different markets existing. The second reason is that these empirically different markets can be categorized according to some basic forms. To understand the forms is important as such, but also if one wants to reform or regulate markets. It is also useful for predicting problems that may occur, such cartels.

The market definition I have proposed has social structure as one of its core elements. Social structure in markets is constituted by the roles of "buyer" and "seller," as mentioned. For a market to come into being there must be actors who can be identified as buyers or sellers. In a traditional bazaar, or in the stock exchange market, participants frequently switch between being buyers or sellers. They are more accurately described as traders of different currencies. In other markets, firms and individuals develop identities, or as people in an industry would say, brands, so that they constantly enact the role of seller or buyer. BMW, to take one example, does not have to inform us that it wants to be identified as the seller of cars, as this is well known by actors, also those who have never considered buying a BMW. Most of us are used to acting as consumers in different markets, such as those for cars, computers, and furniture. The most direct example of a market in which people, who normally are buyers, operate as seller is the labor market.[2]

From the perspective of social structure, it is possible to make an important distinction, between markets in which actors hold more or less permanent roles as either ”buyer” or “seller,” and markets in which actors switch roles. Let us call the first type “fixed role markets,” and the second “switch role markets.” This is an ideal-typical distinction between two mutually exclusive market forms. The distinction, in other words, separates markets in which actors' identities are tied to a more general role that encompasses the two roles of buyer and seller from those in which actors “permanently” take the role of either buyer or seller. This distinction has implications for the possibility of organizing markets, as well as for the identity formation and eventually the being of those participating in this market.

The stock exchange, with its traders who switch roles between “buyer” and “seller” several times a day, is the typical example of a switch role market. Swap markets, financial markets, currency markets, and some auction markets are additional examples of switch role markets, in which actors switch roles and appear on both sides of the market interface. Also, markets for metals futures and other rights, which can be exchanged many times before the contract is due to expire, are examples of switch role markets. Real estate agents may in some countries act on behalf of customers as buyers and sometimes as sellers of properties. The market for emissions rights is yet another example of switch role markets.

The neoclassical market model refers to switch role markets, in which everyone is simply an isolated ego capable of signing contracts as buyer and seller. Economic man has no identity as “seller,” “buyer,” “producer,” or “consumer.” In fact, the starting point of economic life according to some economists is the market, or as Williamson puts it: “In the beginning there were markets” (1975: 20). Organizations and networks are, seen from this perspective, later evolve-

2 The labor market is interesting from many aspects, and sociologists have paid serious attention to it since Marx. They have not, however, made much theoretical progress (Streeck 2005).

ments. In this market world, economic men are striking deals by "signing" contracts with one another for each and every transaction.

This idea of the market as a social formation in which actors do not hold permanent roles is not an insight gained from historical research.[3] It is merely a reflection of the fact that Walras developed his theory by looking at the Paris stock exchange. This stock exchange, like any other, is a place where "traders" sell and buy rights or, more precisely, shares in companies or derivatives, that is, rights to buy or sell a right at a given price in the future. The notion of "trader" seems, etymologically, to refer to the course of action, namely what one does. Trading is the activity associated with people in a trade who engage in economic transactions with one another and with people from other trades. An actor in a stock exchange market, for example, has an identity as trader, agent, and dealer, but not an identity as seller or buyer (Smith 1981). Trader is thus a more general role, which encompasses the roles of "buyer" and "seller." Traders may not only compete, they all share the interest of a large trading volume, which means that they have a common interest in making the trading place – their market – as attractive as possible. Trading places may of course compete, and we thus have a competition also between market places. The common interest among competitors at the collective level means that collective action and collaboration is likely, also among actors who in the market are fierce competitors.

I have so far discussed markets in which actors switch roles. The services that traders offer to clients, however, are offered in a market in which they are permanently identified as sellers. This market for trading services is of another form, called producer market. Despite the accuracy of the neoclassical model as an account of the stock exchange, it is almost a paradox that the most influential theory of markets is not able to account properly for what goes on in most of the markets we observe. The majority of real markets – such as those for chain saws, cars, beer, power plants, or stamps and the market for traders services – are fixed role markets, in which the market identity of each actor is fixed (tied) to only one side of the market (producer/seller or consumer/buyer). Thus, car manufacturers (such as Volvo, Opel, and Toyota) have identities that are tied to the role of sellers (producers) of cars. The role of seller is fixed in the consumer market, which means that they do not also operate as consumers (buyers) of cars. This is not to deny that car manufacturers operate as buyers in labor markets or in markets for tires, organizational consultants, and many other inputs needed for the production of cars. Car producers are nonetheless identified as sellers in the market which generates their identity as car produc-

[3] Historical and anthropological research, the two best sources for understanding pre-modern forms of economic coordination, suggest, in contrast to the market, network, autarchy and organization as the most common pre-modern forms.

ers. This market, in other words, is the core market in the car industry, and the activities of actors in the industry are ultimately oriented to this market.

Harrison White (White 1981) has called a segment of these markets producer market. In these markets, sellers are also producers of what they sell. To be a producer who is offering his output on the market is very common form of market identity. In fixed role markets the sellers – all of whom share the role as seller of a particular product or service – are clustered together in a role structure (White 1981). These producers make up the social structure of the producer market. Within such a market, i.e., the ordered social structure, the individual firms create niches, which tend to be rather stable over time. These niches are the combined result of the selling firms' ambition to differentiate from each other, by specialization, and buyers' perception of them. Firms can often benefit from monopolistic competition. Hence, though all of the sellers compete, this is not a competition with identical offers, which can only be separated with price. Instead firms compete with "bundles" of different offers, composed of price-product-quality-delivery-combinations (Chamberlin 1953). Sellers in producer markets gain identities when they position themselves over time in relation to their competitors.

Sellers' structurally equivalent positions indicate not only competition, it is also a reason for them to work together, to protect the market, and perhaps to create cartels and other ways of strengthening their common position vis-à-vis the buyers. It is an important insight, that though markets are organized differently, and though they may show all signs of fierce competition, there is still much room for collaborative work at the collective level of market actors, often through meta-organizations (Ahrne and Brunsson 2008).

There are of course many other aspects, and distinctions regarding markets, that can and should be included if we are to get a full picture of markets. This brief text has focused on the core of markets – the elements that make them separate from other forms of economic coordination. The distinction between fixed and switch role market has been highlighted. This text points at the literature on markets that must be consulted to get a better understanding of markets and their role in society.[4]

Concluding Discussion

Markets are central in the contemporary economy. The large variety of markets should be seen as result of specialization, since economic organizations cannot do "everything". Several disciplines have tried to explain them and their role in

[4] There are, for example, sociological texts that provide overviews and introductions to the existing literature and issues (e.g., Aspers 2011; Knorr-Cetina and Preda 2004; Swedberg 2003; Swedberg 2005).

society, and we do have a fair amount of knowledge of markets. Economists have largely taken them as a given starting point. This means that they are seldom the object of study; more often they function as the taken for granted explanatory force of economic interaction. Anthropologists have largely studied economic interaction in pre-modern societies, though they increasingly have turned towards contemporary phenomena (e.g., Hart 2000). Historians have produced numerous interesting studies in which markets are central, but also historical syntheses, as Braudel (1992). Geographers have studied markets, and though the spatial dimension has been highlighted, it is harder to see an independent theoretical contribution from this field. Sociologists have also studied markets, and the field has grown quite big (Swedberg 2003), and offered both empirical findings and theoretical statements.

It is nonetheless the case that much research, from heterodox economics to neighboring disciplines, mostly has tried to rectify the edifice of economics. Though we should draw on the large wealth of knowledge produced by all disciplines, we must also be ready to question some of the basic assumptions of the neoclassical economic market model. Many issues can be addressed, but the perhaps most basic assumption is that of the economic man. Sociologists, who historically has been the rivaling social science discipline to economics has essentially tried to add flesh and blood to economic man. The origin of this man is in political economy, and sociologists, most notably Weber, took him over at the dawn of sociology. Also many sociologists employing networks see them only as instrumental, and not as essential of those studied. To begin analysis with social man is one way to present radical alternatives to dominating view of economic man. This is not the place to have an extensive discussion of this matter.[5]

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